United Nations E/CONF.105/76

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 July 2017

Original: English

Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names
New York, 8-17 August 2017
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Reports by Governments on the situation in their countries and on the progress made in the standardization of geographical names since the Tenth Conference (for distribution only)

Report of Finland

Summary**

The Institute for the Languages of Finland acts as an authoritative and coordinating organ in matters related to the standardization of place names by providing guidance for administrative bodies and by checking geographical names in the Geographic Names Register of the National Land Survey of Finland. The work is carried out on the basis of onomastic field research conducted since the beginning of the twentieth century, linguistic considerations, cultural history, local tradition and the practical demands of everyday life.

The main measures related to the standardization of place names that were taken from 2012 to 2017 were the proposal to enact legislation on place names and the digitalization of the names collection (names archive) of the Institute for the Languages of Finland.

In January 2014, the working group on clear administrative language, appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture, issued a plan of action to improve the language of authorities. As a concrete proposal concerning the communication of the authorities, the plan of action includes a suggestion for enacting an act on place names to clarify the usage of traditional place names and the planning of new official names.

The digitalization of the names collection of the Institute for the Languages of Finland began in 2014. The project aims to convert all of the archive's place name cards, data capture maps and the related attributes and metadata to digital format. The objective is to open the digital archive by the end of 2017.

From 2012 to 2017, the Institute has continued to check the names on the Place Name Register maintained by the National Land Survey of Finland. Printed

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Sirkka Paikkala, Ulla Onkamo (Institute for the Languages of Finland) and Teemu Leskinen (National Land Survey of Finland), and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/76/CRP.76.

17-09390 (E) 200717

Please recycle

and electronic publications have been compiled of place names, including exonyms and settlement names, and recommendations and statements have been made on name planning and the spelling and use of place names.

The Geographic Names Register of the National Land Survey of Finland is the authoritative geographic names data repository of Finland and one of the elements included in the national and international spatial data infrastructure. The Register, initially developed in the late 1990s, was entirely renewed in a National Land Survey of Finland development project undertaken from 2010 to 2014. The reform covered the names data model and database, the names data management and integration with the production of national maps, the production application as well as the production lines and organization of work. The Geographic Names Register names feature classification, information services and data products have also been renewed.